

Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and this is the 8<sup>th</sup> principle minute. With the adoption of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, our congregation committed to dismantle racism, beginning within our walls.

Transforming the culture of First U to a “community of communities” is the key to dismantling institutional racism. This was one of the clear messages we received at the “Building a Culture of Inclusion” workshop, led by Paula Cole Jones.

We at First U have always seen ourselves as a family and it has been the source of many positive aspects of our work, including our long-standing efforts to address individual racism. However, families are exclusive structures with a defined “in” and “out” - and an intentional effort must be made to bring those on the outside in.

In order to begin to dismantle institutional racism in our congregation, we need to create an inclusive, relational environment, and make plans and decisions for the greater good. We need to expand our “Belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every INDIVIDUAL” to include “the inherent worth and dignity of each COMMUNITY”.

Communities already exist within our congregation. Communities are the places where people find connections and are the bridges to the wider community. A healthy congregation is one where communities have the opportunity to grow themselves.

On Dec 5th, after coffee hour, there will be an opportunity for an open dialogue on what it means to build a community of communities which is key to achieve our goal of Beloved Community. If you missed the workshop in October, there will be opportunities over the next few weeks to view highlights from the workshop on zoom.

Together we will continue this journey toward spiritual wholeness, build a beloved community, educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist. We will continue to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions.